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ABSTRACT

These two documents pertain to the "Parents and Schools: Success through Partnership" program. The presentation guide for school administrators and Teachers" is intended to help school personnel present the program and its associated video, which addresses common culturally-based causes of misunderstandings between Hispanic American parents and school personnel. The video highlights the importance of parents and schools working together to enhance the school experience of the Hispanic student. Suggestions for leading group discussions are given, along with an imagery exercise to help teachers and administrators put themselves in the place of Hispanic parents. "Guia para Padres Hispanos" is the Spanish-language guide for parents participating in the program. It introduces and expands on the video. Attached are an English-language and a Spanish-language brochure that describe the parent outreach program and review its materials. An order blank is included to request the program literature. (SLD)

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"Parents and Schools: Success through Partnership"

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A Presentation Guide for School Administrators & Teachers

Guidance/Career Development Services
Alexandria City Public Schools
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Copyright©1990, Alexandria, Virginia City Public Schools PARENTS AND SCHOOLS: SUCCESS THROUGH PARTNERSHIP: School Administrators & Teachers guide was prepared through district funding. No portion of this document may be reproduced or transmitted in any form by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopy, recording or any information storage and retrieval system without permission in writing from the Alexandria City Public Schools.

PREFACE

The number of Hispanics in the United States reached 20 million in 1989. By the year 2000, one third of the U. S. population will consist of people of color, with ten percent of the total population being Hispanic. By 2020, the Hispanic population will be the largest U. S. minority. Already in some states such as California, ethnic minority school children constitute the majority of students. As a further example, 80 percent of the Texas student population by the year 2000 (Grades K-12) will be ethnic minorities.

Educational attainment is important for success in American society. As the United States shifts to an economy based on technology and information, the American worker will need to become increasingly skilled, trained and educated. In addition, it is estimated that the average worker already changes careers four times during a lifetime. This requires flexibility and adaptability, along with a sound educational base for making successful career transitions.

Unfortunately, the rates of educational attainment for Hispanics are very low. In a study of eighteen- and nineteen-year old Hispanics, the National Council of La Raza found that, in 1988, 31 percent had dropped out of high school, compared to 18 percent of African Americans, and 14 percent of Anglos at the same age. Forty to fifty percent of all Hispanic students leave school before the 10th grade, according to other figures. A 1990 report by the U. S. Bureau of the Census found that three out of ten Hispanic high school graduates, aged 18 to 24, were enrolled in college in 1988, about the same percentage as in 1978. Thus, there appears to have been little or no improvement over time in the overall college attendance rates for Hispanics. Some writers state that the political atmosphere and

the policy changes of the 1980s have produced a dismal educational climate for the Hispanic student. The results include the increasing segregation of Hispanic students in public schools, the heightened isolation of Hispanic students due to academic tracking, soaring dropout rates, and the subsequent social and economic costs.

Studies have found that Hispanic students at different levels of the educational system--from kindergarten to graduate school--report significantly negative experiences while in school. What's more, the typical dropout students is likely to be a "C" student who does not leave school because of grades or lack of ability, but instead due to the negative nature of school experiences.

The negativity may stem in part from the adverse perceptions that the school system holds about Hispanics, as well as those held by Hispanics about the school system. For example, teachers and administrators may view Hispanics' lack of involvement as disinterest or lack of caring, rather than considering other possible explanations. They may see Hispanic students' nonverbal behavior, such as lack of eye contact, as being disrespectful, rather than recognizing it is a sign of respect. Hispanic parents may view the schools as alien, unapproachable environments. They may feel a lack of belongingness, or may be put off by a bureaucratic structure to which they do not relate. Hispanic parents may not realize that the school systems expect them to be "co-educators" of their children. They may not realize the power they have to influence the academic futures of their children through increased involvement in school activities.

This video discussion guide is intended to address some of the misperceptions on both sides. Using the video as a stimulus for discussion, the guide is designed to highlight the key points from the video and to

stimulate helpful ideas for concrete action. The format of the guide is as follows:

I. Introduction.
II. Small Group Discussion of the Video
III. Imagery Exercise.
IV. Generating Ideas for Action.
V. Recommended Resources.

PARENTS AND SCHOOLS: SUCCESS THROUGH PARTNERSHIP
A VIDEO PRESENTATION GUIDE FOR
SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS AND TEACHERS
I. INTRODUCTION

The leader may wish to begin by introducing her or himself, and perhaps by having the participants introduce themselves to the persons sitting on either side of them. The following introduction may be used:

"You have just seen a video presentation that highlights the importance of school systems and parents working together to enhance the successful and enjoyable school experiences of Hispanic students. Our goal is to discuss and explore specific ideas which you can implement or try in your community for helping to bring Hispanic parents and school systems together in effective ways. By the end of this meeting, you should have some ideas which can be put into a plan of action."

"Let's begin by discussing your impressions of the video."

II. GROUP DISCUSSION OF THE VIDEO

The following discussions may be conducted in small groups of four to six people, or in the full group depending on the preferences of the leader. However, we do recommend that small groups be used to enhance involvement if the total group is larger than 20 people. If small groups are formed, a facilitator should be selected for each small group who is to keep the discussion focused on the stimulus questions provided below. This person may also take notes, or assign someone else to act as a recorder. Preferably, members should be instructed to form into groups with others whom they do not know. Introductions may be made again in small groups. Each small group facilitator should lead the discussion of the video using the following questions as guides. Allow approximately 20 minutes for discussion.

Discussion Questions:

1. What are your overall reactions to the video?

2. What have you been taught about a parent's role in educating children? How might this be different from that Hispanic parents?

3. How do you think your hopes and expectations about education for students are the same as, and different from, those held by Hispanics?

4. Hispanics who are recent immigrants can be overwhelmed by the newness of American culture. What did you feel when you heard the grandmother in the video expressing her confusion about American culture?

5. What kinds of difficulties are presented in the video which you yourself have encountered with Hispanic parents and their children? What has been done to help with those difficulties?

6. What resources (e.g., people, readings, workshops, etc.) have you found useful in understanding the cultural conflicts which can occur between Hispanic parents and the schools?

After the discussions are completed, the leader convenes the large group once again. The small group facilitators or recorders briefly share and discuss key points from the discussions. Each group should report for two or three minutes.

III. IMAGERY EXERCISE

The following exercise is intended to help the audience experience some of the thoughts and feelings which Hispanic parents might feel as "outsiders." It asks participants to use their imagination (or imagery) to enter into the minds and hearts of the Hispanic parents shown on the tape.

The group leader should make the following introductory remarks:

"In the video, you may remember that some Hispanic parents with a child were looking in on the school activities from the outside, trying to make sense of what was happening. At one point, a school door slams shut, emphasizing the feeling of being left out."

"I would like to take you on a brief trip into your imagination to explore the thoughts and feelings of those parents, to experience what it might be like from the parents' point of view."

"Right now, just settle back in your chairs as comfortably as you can. Take in a few deep breaths to relax yourself. (Pause a few seconds.) You might want to close your eyes if this helps to increase the vividness of the

images in your mind. (Pause a few seconds.)

"Now think back to a time in your own life when you felt left out, different, and confused because you were in a strange situation. Remember your fear and anxiety? If you've ever traveled to a foreign country, maybe remembering your experiences there can help you get in touch with those feelings again. (Pause a few seconds.)

"Now remember the scene with the Hispanic parents and child looking in on the school activities. Try to imagine yourself inside the bodies of those parents. You are now viewing the school through their eyes--strange architecture, unfamiliar people, a language being spoken that you don't quite understand, sounds and smells that you've never experienced before. (Pause a few seconds.) Everything is so confusing because you just don't know the rules, the things that are expected of you. Yet this is the place where you must send your children to be educated. (Pause a few seconds.)

"As you experience what the Hispanic parents are thinking and feeling, ask yourself, "What would I need to make all this less confusing? What would help me deal with the unfamiliar aspects of the school system?" (Pause a few seconds.)

"Keep thinking about what you need as you continue to experience what it's like to be in a strange environment. (Pause a few seconds.) Now let's return to the here and now and talk about your experiences.

The leader should pose the following debriefing questions to the group as a whole:

1. What thoughts and feelings did you have as you imagined yourself as the Hispanic parents in the video?

2. What would have helped you reduce the feelings of being an outsider? What could be done to make you feel a part of the school?

Once comments have been elicited for about 10 minutes, the leader should say:

"Now we're going to move on to actually generating some specific ideas which can help create effective partnerships between parents and schools."

IV. GENERATING IDEAS FOR ACTION

The group leader should make the following remarks:

"In the video, you may remember the narrator mentioned several things that parents could do to become more involved in school activities. Some of the things that were mentioned were:

1. **Have parents be visible at school;**
2. **Encourage parents to know the child's teacher and school principal;**
3. **Urge parents to volunteer and help in the classroom;**
4. **Have parents serve on parent committees.**

We would like to take some time now to talk more specifically about how to put these ideas into action; and to generate additional thoughts about parent involvement. For example, what would it mean for parents to be more visible at school? Some schools appreciate parents assisting in such activities as: working on a school play to construct the set or to sew costumes; working as a monitor during recess or lunch; tutoring students; planning school festivals, etc. We would like for you to get back into your small groups and talk about ideas that you think might be helpful. Have the recorder write down all the ideas for reporting back to the larger group.

The same small groups may re-convene or the leader may form new groupings. This second discussion period should last about 15 minutes. Once the discussion is finished, the recorders should briefly report back to the large group for two or three minutes each. The leader should ask the audience as a whole to pull out the ideas that are most relevant nd meaningful for that particular community or school. For example, what has already been tried? What has been successful or unsuccessful? What new projects could create effective parent involvement with the schools? The group may wish to discuss potential next steps to implement some of the ideas either individually or collectively. If parents and/or other community members are present, for example, the audience may wish to discuss possible options with them. Or these discussions may occur in meetings set up later. The main point here is to develop some idea about next steps and follow through in the planning process.

To end the session at this point, the leader may wish to highlight the key points of the video and the issues presented from the discussion. Additionally, the leader may wish to conclude as follows:

"We hope that you have found the video and discussions interesting and helpful in understanding the importance of the partnership between parents and schools. The responsibility for the future of Hispanic education must be shared by everyone who has an interest in the outcome. Thank you for your concern which you have demonstrated by attending this session."

V. RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

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Arriba los padres y las escuelas: una asociación crítica

Guía para padres hispanos

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PROLOGO

En 1989, el total de personas de origen hispano residentes en los Estados Unidos llegó a 20 millones. Para el año 2000, un tercio de la población de los EE.UU. estará integrada por gente de color, con un diez por ciento de la población total de origen hispano. Para el año 2020, la población hispanoparlante será la minoría más grande de los EE.UU. En algunos estados, California por ejemplo, los niños en edad escolar pertenecientes a minorías étnicas ya constituyen la mayoría de los alumnos, mientras que el 80 por ciento de la población escolar de Texas (de jardín de infantes hasta el último curso de la escuela secundaria) pertenecerá a minorías étnicas para el año 2000.

Los logros en materia educativa constituyen un factor importante para tener éxito dentro de la sociedad estadounidense. A medida que la economía de los Estados Unidos se base cada vez más en la tecnología e información, el trabajador estadounidense tendrá que tener una mejor formación, capacitación y educación. Además, se estima que el trabajador medio cambia de carrera cuatro veces durante toda su vida. Esto exige una cierta flexibilidad y capacidad de adaptación, a la par de una instrucción básica sólida, para estar en condiciones de efectuar transiciones laborales acertadas.

Desgraciadamente, los niveles de instrucción de las personas hispanoparlantes son muy bajos. Un estudio que el Consejo Nacional de La Raza realizó en 1988 con personas de origen hispano, de dieciocho a diecinueve años de edad, demostró que el 31 por ciento había abandonado la escuela secundaria, en comparación con el 18 por ciento entre los habitantes de origen africano y el 14 por ciento de los de origen inglés de la misma edad. Del cuarenta al cincuenta por ciento de todos los alumnos de origen hispano abandonan la escuela antes del décimo grado, de acuerdo con otras cifras. Un informe publicado en 1990 por la Oficina de Censos de los EE.UU. demostró que en 1988 tres de diez alumnos de origen hispano graduados de la escuela secundaria, entre 18 y 24 años de edad, estaban matriculados en colegios universitarios, casi el mismo porcentaje que en 1978. Por lo tanto, pareciera que ha habido muy pocos cambios en el transcurso del tiempo en materia de asistencia de hispanos a los colegios de estudios superiores. Algunos autores

afirman que el ambiente político y los cambios normativos de la década de 1980 han generado un clima educativo adverso para los alumnos de origen hispano. Los resultados abarcan la creciente segregación de los alumnos hispanoparlantes en las escuelas públicas, el aislamiento progresivo de los mismos como consecuencia del agrupamiento académico por secciones, el aumento del nivel de deserción escolar y los consiguientes costos socioeconómicos.

Varios estudios demuestran que los alumnos de origen hispano pertenecientes a varios niveles del sistema educativo, del jardín de infantes hasta el último curso de posgrado, aducen haber vivido experiencias bastantes negativas mientras asistían a clase. Asimismo, si bien el típico alumno que abandona la escuela por lo general es aquel que obtiene notas de nivel "C", la deserción se debe al carácter negativo de sus experiencias escolares y no a las notas o la falta de capacidad.

Es probable que ese carácter negativo se deba en parte a la percepción desfavorable que el sistema escolar tiene del alumno hispanoparlante, así como la percepción que las personas hispanas tienen del sistema escolar. Por ejemplo, es posible que los maestros y los directivos de las escuelas piensen que la falta de participación de los hispanos se deba a una falta de interés o preocupación, en vez de considerar algunos otros motivos factibles. Es probable que interpreten el comportamiento no verbal del alumno hispano, el no mirar directamente a la cara por ejemplo, como una muestra de falta de respeto, en vez de verlo como una señal de respeto. Es posible que los padres hispanos tengan la impresión que en las escuelas hay un ambiente foráneo e inaccesible y sientan que no pertenecen al mismo, o bien se sientan intimidados por una organización burocrática con la que no tienen ninguna afinidad. Es posible que los padres hispanos no se den cuenta de que el sistema escolar espera su participación como coeducadores de sus hijos, así como que ignoren que su influencia es muy importante para el futuro académico de sus niños y para ello deben participar más en las actividadades escolares.

Esta guía presentada en forma de video está destinada a abordar algunas de las percepciones erróneas de ambas partes. El video sirve como estímulo para conversar y analizar ideas, mientras que la guía tiene por objeto destacar los puntos clave del mismo y fomentar las ideas útiles para actividades concretas. La guía consta de las siguientes partes:

I. Introducción
II. Análisis del video en grupos pequeños
III. La elaboración de ideas para actividades
IV. Bibliografía recomendada.

ARRIBA LOS PADRES Y LAS ESCUELAS: UNA ASOCIACIÓN CRÍTICA

I. INTRODUCCION

El presentador puede comenzar presentándose al grupo y pidiendo a los participantes que se presenten a las personas que están sentadas al lado. Se puede usar la siguiente introducción:

"Acaban de ver un video que destaca la importancia de la cooperación entre el sistema escolar y los padres con el objeto de lograr que los niños hispanos vivan experiencias satisfactorias y agradables en la escuela. Nuestra meta es analizar y explorar ideas específicas que ustedes pueden poner en práctica o probar en su comunidad. Al final de esta reunión, habrán de tener algunas ideas que puedan integrar en un plan de acción personal".

"Comencemos por comentar sus impresiones sobre el video".

II. ANALISIS DEL VIDEO EN GRUPOS PEQUEÑOS

Se pueden realizar los siguientes análisis en grupos pequeños de cuatro a seis personas, o bien con todo el grupo, según lo decida o prefiera el presentador. Sin embargo, si todo el grupo consiste en más de 20 personas, recomendamos usar grupos pequeños para dar mayor oportunidad de participación. Si se forman grupos pequeños, habrá de designarse un director para cada uno, quien se encargará de que el análisis no se aparte de las preguntas indicadas a continuación. Esta persona también puede tomar nota, o bien designar a alguien para que lo haga. Es preferible que se sugiera la formación de grupos entre personas que no se conozcan, con las correspondientes presentaciones entre los integrantes de los mismos. Cada uno de los directores de grupo habrá de dirigir el análisis del video usando las siguientes preguntas como guía. El análisis habrá de durar entre 20 y 30 minutos aproximadamente.

Preguntas para el análisis:

1. **¿Cuáles son sus impresiones generales sobre el video?**
2. **¿Qué enseñanza le brinda con respecto al papel que juegan los padres en la educación de sus hijos?**
3. **Si ustedes se criaron en un país distinto de los EE.UU., ¿qué expectativas distintas tienen los padres de ese país con respecto a las éste, especialmente en materia de la educación de sus propios hijos?**
4. **¿Qué espera y ansía para la educación de sus hijos?**
5. **¿Se sienten identificados con la abuela del video que piensa que la cultura** de los EE.UU. a veces es desconcertante y difícil de entender? ¿Conocen a otras personas que se encuentren en ese mismo estado de confusión? ¿Cómo se puede ayudarlos a abordar esa confusión?
6. ¿Se sienten identificados con los padres que estaban en la puerta de la escuela observando las actividades, cuando se les cerró la puerta de golpe? ¿Conocen a otros padres que se sientan excluidos de las actividades escolares? ¿Qué piensan y sienten con respecto a esto?

Una vez que se finalice con el análisis, el presentador reunirá a todo el grupo nuevamente. Los directores de los grupos pequeños o los encargados de tomar nota aportarán sus ideas y analizarán brevemente los puntos clave de las conversaciones mantenidas. Cada uno de los grupos habrá de presentar un informe de dos a tres minutos.

III. LA ELABORACION DE IDEAS PARA ACTIVIDADES

El director del grupo habrá de realizar las siguientes observaciones:

"Como recuerdan, el narrador del video habló de varias cosas que los padres podrán hacer para participar más en las actividades de la escuela. Algunas de las cosas mencionadas son:

1. **Visitar más la escuela.**
2. **Conocer al maestro de sus hijos y al director de la escuela.**
3. **Ofrecerse como voluntarios y colaborar en las clases.**
4. **Participar en los comités de padres.**

Ahora nos gustaría dedicar unos minutos para hablar más concretamente sobre cómo poner en práctica estas ideas y elaborar otras para una mayor participación de los padres. Por ejemplo, ¿qué implicaría para ustedes el visitar más la escuela? En algunas escuelas se aprecia mucho que los padres colaboren en actividades tales como preparar el escenario y los trajes para una obra de teatro escolar, supervisar a los alumnos durante la hora del almuerzo o los recreos, ayudar a los alumnos con sus lecciones, planificar los festivales escolares, etc. Los invitamos a volver a sus grupos pequeños para conversar y elaborar ideas que puedan resultar útiles. Pidan al encargado de tomar nota que anote todas las ideas para luego informar a todo el grupo general.

Pueden volver a reunirse los mismos grupos pequeños, o bien se pueden formar grupos nuevos. La segunda parte del análisis habrá de durar alrededor de 15 minutos. Una vez que finalice este período, los encargados de tomar nota habrán de informar brevemente a todo el grupo general durante dos o tres minutos cada uno. El presentador pedirá a la audiencia en general que escojan las ideas más importantes y significativas para esa comunidad o escuela en particular. Por ejemplo, ¿qué ideas ya se han probado? ¿Cuáles han tenido éxito y cuáles fracasaron? ¿Qué proyectos nuevos podrían estimular una participación eficaz de los padres en las escuelas? Es posible que el grupo desee analizar, ya sea en forma individual como colectiva, los pasos a seguir para poner en ejecución algunas de las ideas. Si se cuenta con la presencia de personal escolar, por ejemplo, la audiencia puede analizar con ellos las opciones posibles. O bien se puede dejar este análisis para reuniones posteriores con los directivos de las escuelas y la comunidad. El objeto principal es

desarrollar ideas con respecto a las medidas y pasos a seguir y adoptar en el proceso de planificación.

A fin de terminar la sesión, el presentador puede resaltar los puntos clave del video y los temas presentados durante el análisis.

Además, el presentador puede añadir lo siguiente:

"Esperamos que el video y el análisis les hayan resultado interesantes y útiles para comprender la importancia de la asociación entre los padres y las escuelas. La responsabilidad del futuro de la educación de los hispanos deberá compartirse entre todos aquellos que estén interesados en los resultados. Muchas gracias por el interés demostrado con su presencia en esta sesión".

IV. BIBLIOGRAFIA RECOMENDADA

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PARENTS AND SCHOOLS

SUCCESS THROUGH PARTNERSHIP

This brochure describes an outreach program aimed at increasing Hispanic parent participation in their children's schooling.

"Parents and Schools: Success Through Partnership" recognizes that both the parents and the schools have a responsibility. Two program kits including professional fourteen minute videos and presentation materials have been developed by the Alexandria City Public Schools for use by parents, school staff, and advocacy groups.

Parent Kit:

- Designed to help Hispanic parents - both mothers and fathers - understand the importance of their role in their child's education. This kit includes a video and presenters guide, both in Spanish.

School Staff and Advocacy Group Kit:

- Designed to help all school staff become sensitive to the feelings, values and concerns of the Hispanic parent.
- Advocacy groups are helped to develop specific strategies that can be used to encourage greater Hispanic parental involvement in the schools. This kit includes a fourteen minute video and two presentation guides: one guide for school staff and another for use with church, community and other Hispanic parent advocacy groups. This video and both presentation guides are in English.

About the "Parents and Schools: Success Through Partnership" Presenter Discussion Guides.

- Written by Augustine Barón, Jr., Psy.D. and Melva J. T. Vasquez, Ph.D, Counseling and Mental Health Center, University of Texas at Austin.
- Provides guidance for discussion leaders.

Who Produced "Parents and Schools: Success Through Partnership"?

- Guidance Resource Center
  Alexandria City Public Schools
- C.H. Wrenn & Associates
  Video Production Company

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Alexandria, Virginia 22302
(703) 824-6708

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ARRIBA LOS PADRES Y ESCUELAS

UNA ASOCIACION CRITICA

Este folleto describe un programa de divulgación destinado a incrementar la participación de los padres hispanos en las actividades escolares de sus hijos.

"¡Arriba Los Padres y Escuelas!: Una Asociación Crítica" reconoce que tantos los padres como las escuelas tienen la responsabilidad. Los dos conjuntos del programa--incluidos los videos de catorce minutos y los materiales de presentación --han sido elaborados por las Escuelas Públicas de la Ciudad de Alexandria para que los usen los padres, el personal escolar y los grupos de apoyo.

Información Para Padres:

- Preparado para ayudar tanto a las madres como los padres hispanos a entender la importancia del papel que juegan en la educación de sus hijos. Esta información consiste en un video y una guía para los interesados. Este programa se ofrece en español.

Información Para El Personal Escolar Y Los Grupos De Apoyo:

- Preparado para ayudar al personal escolar a comprender mejor los sentimientos, valores e inquietudes de los padres hispanos.
- Se brinda ayuda a los grupos de apoyo en la elaboración de estrategias específicas que puedan emplearse para fomentar la participación de los padres hispanos en las escuelas. Esta información incluye un video de catorce minutos y dos guías de presentación: una guía para el personal escolar y otra para los grupos de la iglesia, la comunidad y demás grupos de apoyo de los padres hispanos. Este video y las dos guías de presentación están en inglés.

Con Respeto A Las Guías:

- Escritas por el doctor en psicología Augustine Barón, Jr., y la Dra. Melva J. T. Vasquez, Centro de Orientación Individual y Salud Mental de la Universidad de Tejas de Austin.
- Proporciona orientación para las personas que dirigen los debates sobre el tema.

¿Quién Produjo "¡Arriba Los Padres Y Escuelas! Una Asociación Crítica"?

- Centro de Recursos de Orientación Escuelas Públicas de la Ciudad de Alexandria
- C.H. Wrenn & Associates, Compañía Productora de Videos

Para recibir información sobre el programa, por favor llame o escriba a:

Kenneth T. Firling
Guidance Specialist
Guidance Resource Center
Alexandria City Public Schools
3330 King Street
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